

Office of Tribal Relations Overview



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES

Washington State Department of Children, Youth & Families

Office of Tribal Relations

The Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) Office of Tribal Relations (OTR) has two primary roles:

- Support the delivery of DCYF services that are of high quality and culturally sensitive.
- Ensure tribes can access DCYF services in a timely manner.

Our office coordinates, monitors, and assesses DCYF's relationships with tribes and Recognized American Indian Organizations (RAIOs), working to enhance and improve government-to-government relationships. Our goal is to assist the collective needs of tribal governments and RAIOs to assure quality and comprehensive program service delivery in the areas of child welfare, tribal foster care, early learning, and juvenile rehabilitation.

DCYF follows a government-to-government relationship in seeking consultation and participation by representatives of tribal

governments in policy development and service program activities in a manner that complies with Chapter 43.376 RCW and the Washington State 1989 Centennial Accord.

Tribal Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC)

The primary focus of the Tribal Policy Advisory Committee (TPAC) is to inform DCYF leadership on tribal priorities regarding child welfare, early learning, and juvenile rehabilitation programs. TPAC provides an avenue for ongoing dialogue on substantive issues impacting children and families in tribal communities.

Contact Us

Website:

www.dcyf.wa.gov/tribal-relations

Email:

dcyf.tribalrelations@dcyf.wa.gov

Training and Prevention Services

Our team is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of tribal youth and families across Washington state by ensuring the effective implementation of culturally responsive practices and adhering to state and federal ICWA laws. OTR collaborates with Washington state tribes to provide access to training and resources in partnership with state entities. Training and professional development are essential for building capacity within tribal communities.

Indigenous Children, Youth & Families (ICYF) Conference

The ICYF conference is a free, annual training event which gathers caregivers, tribal partners, caseworkers, early learning providers, and juvenile rehabilitation staff from around the state to learn together and improve our shared practice.

Positive Indian Parenting

The Positive Indian Parenting (PIP) training prepares tribal and non-tribal child welfare personnel to train Native parents using a culturally specific approach. Developed by the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), this culturally based training is grounded in traditional Native teachings about child rearing.

Contact Us

Website:

www.dcyf.wa.gov/tribal-relations/training

Tribal Foster Care

Since time immemorial, tribal communities have cared for their children in times of need. It is the tradition of Native American people to care for their children through extended family and community. Tribal members are our best hope for finding, training, and supporting Native families to care for Native children in foster care. DCYF needs Native families across the state to ensure children removed from abusive and neglectful situations remain close to their family, friends, community, and culture.

Why Native Foster Homes are Needed

- In Washington, American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth represent approximately 1% of the overall population and 4% of the population of children in foster care. (The AFCARS Report: Washington, 2023)
- Tribal community is family. Family connections in tribal communities extend beyond the notions of a nuclear family.
- Evidence shows that children's mental and physical health are best served when placed with a family member or tribal member.

(Bell, T., & Romano, E., 2017)

- Native foster homes keep Native children connected to their culture and community.
- Washington state ranks among the top 10 states with the highest rate of Native children in foster care. (Puzzanchera & Taylor, 2021)

Contact Us

Website:

www.dcyf.wa.gov/tribal-relations/tribal-foster-care



Tribal Early Learning

DCYF is committed to preventing further involvement in the Child Welfare system by providing early learning support and resources.

Tribal Child Care Licensing

Tribal Child Care Licensing assists with certification for payment only (CFPO) processes for tribal nations and compliance to ensure tribal child care providers meet health, safety, and quality standards to receive the Working Connections Child Care subsidy.



Indian Policy Early Learning Committee (IPEL)

The Indian Policy Early Learning (IPEL) committee assesses the collective needs of tribal governments and Indian organizations, ensuring quality and comprehensive service delivery to all American Indian and Alaska Natives in Washington state. Each federally recognized tribe in Washington is entitled to determine one delegate by tribal resolution.

Contact Us

Website:

www.dcyf.wa.gov/tribal-relations/tribal-early-learning

Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR)

JR and tribes have a strong commitment to the youth we serve. We come together as a team to create cultural relevant services and provide Native culture and events to youth who are incarcerated.

Residential Custody Service Agreement (RCSA)

DCYF contracts with tribes to provide residential custody services in a rehabilitation residential facility for youth sentenced by a tribal juvenile court for more than 30 days. This supports American Indian and Alaska Native youth in need of specialized treatment and rehabilitation services with services in a secured Juvenile Rehabilitation residential facility, provided at no cost to tribes.

Services include:

- Mental Health Services
- Drug and Alcohol Treatment
- Educational Opportunities
- Employment Training

Community Justice Accountability Act (CJAA)

CJAA funds are designed to reduce youth crime and develop interventions for youth who are diverted, on court supervision, or on probation through tribal or local county juvenile court. This funding honors tribes' inherent right to design and operate culturally relevant and appropriate programs on behalf of the population served.

Contact Us

Website:

www.dcyf.wa.gov/tribal-relations/jr





www.dcyf.wa.gov

DCYF does not discriminate and provides equal access to its programs and services for all persons without regard to race, color, gender, religion, creed, marital status, national origin, citizenship or immigration status, age, sexual orientation or gender identity, veteran or military status, status as a breastfeeding mother, and the presence of any physical, sensory, or mental disability or use of a dog guide or service animal. If you would like free copies of this publication in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations at 1-800-723-4831 or email communications@dcyf.wa.gov.

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